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For Immediate Release



Reminders for Child Passenger Safety!

With the start of a new school year, Chatham Board of Health and the Madison Health Department remind all residents that it is important to take the necessary precautions while on the road to ensure the safety of Chatham Township's children. Car crashes are the number one killer of children ages 1 to 12 in the United States. Ensuring a child's safety begins with finding the right car seat. Car seats should be based on the child's age and size. Young children should be kept in a rear facing car seat for as long as possible until at least 3 years of age. Once they reach the manufacturer's height or weight limit, the child should then move on to a front facing car seat with a harness and then eventually a booster seat. To maximize safety, children should sit in a car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirement.

Installation is just as important as finding the right car seat. In the U.S., 3 out of 4 car seats are not used properly. Parents should make sure to read both the car seats instruction manual and their vehicle's owner manual to learn how to correctly install the car seat. Residents may also go to <http://www.nj.gov/oag/hts/childseats/childseatchecks.html> to find a location where certified Officers will correctly install and check child safety seats. Until at least 12 years of age, children should sit in the back seat for increased safety. New Jersey law requires all passengers to wear seatbelts, regardless of age and where they are sitting in a car.

In the state of New Jersey it is ILLEGAL to talk or text on a handheld device while driving a vehicle. Cell phone usage is a huge distraction and the results could and have been fatal. According to www.distraction.gov, about 21% of drivers ages 15 – 19 involved in a fatal car

crash were distracted by the use of cell phones. Using a “hands free” device to make phone calls means the brain is multitasking which impairs the driver’s ability to drive safely. To ensure the safety of yourself, your passengers, and others who share the road, avoid using a handheld device while driving.

Pedestrian safety is “at risk” in Chatham Township. Both pedestrians and drivers should be observant and follow the rules- especially while in a school zone. Pedestrians should be sure to only cross the road in designated areas with crosswalks, and to look left, right and left again before crossing. Drivers must be sure to drive carefully and share the road with pedestrians and bike riders, especially in residential areas. With Halloween approaching, it is important that pedestrians walk smart and drivers do their part to make Chatham Township a safer town.



Officer Chad Rybka of Madison with Layla Laudadio properly fastened in her front facing car seat.

With the start of the new school year and Halloween around the corner, Chatham Board of Health and the Madison Health Department remind all residents that it is important to take the necessary precautions while on the road to ensure the safety of Chatham Township's children.

Car crashes are the number one killer of children ages 1 - 12 in the United States.

Finding the Right Car Seats

- Car seats are based on the child's age and size
- Young children should be kept in a rear facing car seat for as long as possible until at least **3 years of age**. **The exact weight and height limits are written on the side or back of the car seat**
- Once they meet the manufacturers height and weight limit, the child should then move on to a front facing car seat, and then eventually a booster seat
- In the U.S. **3 out of 4** car seats are installed incorrectly - parents should be sure to read both the car seat instruction manual and the vehicle's owner manual for proper installation. **Residents can click [here](#) for locations in Morris County where certified officers will correctly install and check car seats for free**
- All passengers are required to wear seatbelts in the state of New Jersey



Pedestrian Safety in Chatham Township



- Pedestrians are reminded to only cross streets at corners, using crosswalks and traffic signals
- Always look left, right and left again before crossing
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic but as far to the left as possible
- Drivers are reminded to always yield to pedestrians and to be especially alert for pedestrians and bikers while driving through residential areas and school zones
- On Halloween, give kids a flashlight to help them see and be more visible to drivers

Cell Phone Usage

- In New Jersey it is illegal to talk or text on a handheld device while driving a vehicle
- According to www.distraction.gov, about **21% of drivers ages 15-19 involved in fatal car crashes** were distracted by the use of cell phones
- Even using a hands free device to make phone calls impairs the drivers ability to drive safely
- To ensure the safety of everyone in the car and sharing the road, avoid using handheld devices while driving